

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6, 8 and 10-17 are pending and stand ready for further action on the merits. Claim 6 has been amended to recite the subject matter of cancelled claim 7. Claims 14 and 15 have been withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to non-elected subject matter.

No new matter has been added by way of the above-amendment.

Issues under 35 USC § 102

Claims 2-4, 6, 10-13 and 16 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ventura (US 6,015,638) or Ventura (US 5,731,104). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 6, as defined in the November 5, 2004 Amendment is patentable over the cited patents to Ventura. However, in order to advance prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 6 to recite the subject matter of claim 7, a claim which is not currently under rejection. Accordingly, this rejection is rendered moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated that claims 1 (2-4, 10-13, 16); 8 (2-4, 10-13, 16) and 17 are allowed and that claim 7 recites allowable subject matter.

Conclusion


With the above remarks, Applicants believe that the claims, as they now stand, define patentable subject matter such that passage of the instant invention to allowance is warranted. However, should the Examiner find to the contrary, Applicants respectfully request that this amendment be entered into the official record to place the claims in better form for appeal.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact **Garth M. Dahlen, Ph.D., Esq.** (Reg. No. 43,575) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment(s)